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**STATEMENT BY THE HONORABLE ROBERT WITTMAN (R-VA)**  
**REPUBLICAN MEMBER**  
**SUBCOMMITTEE ON INSULAR AFFAIRS, OCEANS AND WILDLIFE**  
**AT THE OVERSIGHT HEARING ON**  
**THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PUBLIC LAW 110-229**  
**(THE CONSOLIDATED NATURAL RESOURCES ACT OF 2008) TO THE**  
**COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS AND GUAM**  
**MAY 18, 2010**

Good afternoon Madam Chairwoman. Today's hearing is the second oversight hearing held by the Subcommittee regarding the implementation of the Consolidated Natural Resources Act of 2008. It has been a little over two years since the enactment of the Act and almost six months since the provisions of the Act went into effect on November 28, 2009.

When Congress drafted the legislation to apply federal immigration laws in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), it included special provisions and Congressional intent language in the Act to allow for the flexible implementation of federal immigration laws in the CNMI to ensure a smooth transition and to promote economic and travel opportunities in the region.

In reading the testimony, I understand there is much frustration in the region with regard to the implementation of the Guam-CNMI Visa Waiver Program. P.L. 110-229 created the joint program to increase tourism opportunities and it appears the implementing regulations make the program more onerous than the U.S. Visa waiver program applied to the 50 states.

We will also hear testimony on the recently released reports from the Government Accountability Office and the Department of the Interior. The GAO report highlights issues being faced by the CNMI and the Department of Homeland Security in implementing the immigration provisions of the Act. The Department of the Interior report gives an accounting of the number of aliens residing in the CNMI, their status and recommendations to Congress.

Madam Chairwoman, I look forward to hearing the views of our witnesses and discussing with them the issues surrounding the implementation of P.L. 110-229 in Guam and the CNMI.

Thank you.